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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities
Forty-seventh session
Agenda item 12

ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RELIGION OR BELIEF

Written statement submitted by International Educational Development, a non-governmental organization on the Roster

The Secretary-General has received the following communication, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

[17 August 1995]

1. One of the strategies of "ethnic cleansing" that Serbian military and paramilitary units undertake in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina is destruction of sacred institutions.

2. International Educational Development/Humanitarian Law Project wishes to inform the international community about this destructive form of intolerance and discrimination. Serbs in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia want to extinguish any trace of religious symbols of other ethnic groups.

3. In recently liberated territories of Croatia, occupiers destroyed 137 Croatian and Muslim sacred objects, and damaged many others.

4. Churches are the palpable testimony of the presence of a specific religious community, its nationality, history and culture. For these reasons they were destroyed either during the attack or following the occupation of a certain area. The Serbian army has not distinguished between historically precious churches - cultural monuments, cathedrals and shrines and simple village churches and chapels. They have destroyed everything, even cemeteries. One mosque in Banjas Luka, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, levelled to the ground, used to be as valuable as Notre Dame of Paris in historical, cultural and architectural meaning.

5. We express a special concern regarding the very difficult situation in the Banja Luka region. Before the war about 80,000 Croatian Catholics lived there. It is a Serbian-dominated region and there was no war destruction. Yet, 55,000 Croatian Catholics were expelled from Banja Luka, and the process of "ethnic cleansing" is continuing every day. In four years 42 churches, 1 monastery, 2 dioceses and 4 mosques were destroyed; 2 nuns and 6 priests were killed. The remaining 25,000 Catholics in the region are exposed to continual violence. Eight hundred Croatian Catholics were killed, mostly in their homes. We have to emphasize again that this is not a region directly affected by war destruction.

6. After the recent Croatian offensive, the process of "ethnic cleansing" by Serbs became stronger in the remaining occupied eastern parts of Croatia, then in Voivodina (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) and the Banja Luka region, continuing with the destruction of sacred institutions.

7. IED/HLP strongly encourages the Sub-Commission to express a clear condemnation of gross violations of the human rights of Catholic and Muslim religious communities on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, and IED/HLP proposes concrete actions by the international community to stop the aggression against civilians and their religious symbols.

8. IED/HLP encloses a list of churches, chapels, mosques and other sacred institutions damaged or destroyed in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

List of damaged and destroyed churches

Zagred archdiocese (139)

All Saints' chapel (Bacin), St. John the Baptist parish church (1770; Badljevina), St. Peter's church (Banski Kovacevac), Holy Trinity church (1834; Barilovecki Cerovac), Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Joseph's church (1782; Barilovecki Leskovac), St. Anne's chapel (Belaj), St. Teresa's parish church (Bjelovar), Holy Spirit chapel (Blatnica Pokupska), St. Martin's chapel (Borovac), St. Barbara's chapel (sixteenth century; Brest Pokupski), St. Andrew's chapel (Brezine), Carmelite Nuns convent and church (Brezovica), St. Luke's chapel (Cernicka Sagovina), St. Peter's parish church (Cernik), St. George's church (Caglic), St. Nicolas Tavelic's church (Cetekovec), St. Anthony's church (1699; Cuntic), Holy Trinity church (Daruvar), Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary chapel (Desni Stefanki), St. Catherine's church (1719; Divusa), Sacred Heart chapel (Lobrovac), St. Mark's chapel (Dolina), St. Mary Magdalene's church (1972; Donja Kupcina), Sacred Heart chapel (Donjani), Beheading of St. John the Baptist church (Dragalic), St. Anthony's

church (Dvoriste), Ascension of Our Lord chapel (Filipovac), St. Catherine's church (1804; Gaj), St. Matthew's church (Giletinci), St. John Nepomuk's church (1830; Glina), Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary church (1687; Gora), St. Vitus' chapel (Gorice), St. Anthony's church (1836; Gornja Bucica), local chapel (Goraja Obrijez), Holy Spirit church (1830; Gornji Bogicevci), St. Thomas' church (1776; Gornji Rajic), St. Philip and Jacob's Church (1796; Gvozdansko), St. Bartholomew's church (1843; Hrastovica), Holy Trinity church (1771; Hrvatska Dubica), The Blessed Virgin Mary cemetery chapel (Hrvatska Dubica), Sacred Heart church (Ivanovo Selo), St. Nicholas's church (Jasenovac), St. Rochus's chapel (Jazavica), local chapel (Josevica), Our Lady of the Snow church (Kamensko), Holy Trinity church (Karlovac), St. Francis Xavier church (1752; Karlovac), St. Joseph's church (Karlovac), Our Lady of the Snow church (Karlovac), St. Anne's chapel (Knezgorica), St. Catherine's church (Komarevo), St. Nicholas' church (1706; Kostajnica), St. Anthony's church (Kostajnica), St. Anne's Cemetery chapel (Kostajnica), local chapel (Kosutarice), St. Anthony's church (Krapje), Holy Cross chapel (Kriz), St. Vitus' church (Ladvenjak), St. Anthony of Padua church (Lasinja), St. Elizabeth's Cemetery chapel (sixteenth century; Letovanci), Jesus Passion chapel (Letovanic), Visitation of Mary chapel (Lijevo Sredicko), St. Francis of Assisi church (Lipik), St. Dorothea's church (Logoriste), Holy Saviour church (Lonja), local chapel (Lucica), St. Matthew's church (Mackovac), St. Martin's chapel (Madari), St. Elias' church (Maja), St. Michael's chapel (Majur), St. George's church (Mala Gorica), St. Dorothea's church (Mala Svarca), St. Martin's chapel (thirteenth century; Martin), Holy Spirit parish church (Miokovicevo), St. Jacob's chapel (Moscenica), Beheading of St. John chapel (Mracaj), St. Anthony of Padua church (Nasice), St. Stephen's church - Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Nova Gradiska), St. Teresa's church (1742; Nova Gradiska), Assumption of Mary church (Nova Gradiska), local chapel (Nova Varos), Transfiguration of Jesus church (Nova Varos), local church (Novi Grabovac), St. Luke's church (Novska), St. Joseph's Cemetery chapel (Novska), St. Vitus' chapel (Okucani), St. Rochus' church (Orljavac), St. Elias' church (Orubica), Assumption of Mary church (Pakrac), St. Joseph's chapel (Pakrac), St. John Nepomuk's chapel (Pakrac), Beheading of St. John chapel (Pecki), St. Lawrence's church (Petrinja), St. Catherine's church (Petrinja), St. Rochus' Cemetery church (Petrinja), St. Elias' church (Petrinja), Holy Trinity Cemetery church (Petrinja), St. Anne's chapel (Pakracka Poljana), St. Fabian and Sebastian's chapel (Poljane), St. Ladislaus' church (Pokupsko; 1739), St. John the Baptist church (1739; Recica).

Croatia

Dakovo diocese: 99 churches and chapels;
Krizevci diocese: 7 churches and chapels;
Rijeka-Senj archdiocese: 30;
Split-Makarska archdiocese: 12;
Dubrovnik diocese: 62;
Sibenik diocese: 51;
Shibenik diocese parishes on the front lines: 7;
Zadar archdiocese: 64;
Monasteries and monastic residences: 59;
Forcibly abandoned monasteries: 11;
Catholic churches in Voivodina and Serbia: 14.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sarajevo archdiocese: 49;
Banja Luka diocese: 42;
Mostar-Duvno and Trebinje-Mrkanj diocese: 27.

Other damaged and destroyed churches and synagogues

Eastern Orthodox churches in Croatia: 19;
Eastern Orthodox churches in Bosnia and Herzegovina: 8;
Evangelical churches in Croatia: 3;
Reformist churches in Croatia: 2;
Baptist churches in Croatia: 3;
Jewish synagogues and cemeteries in Croatia: 7;
Jewish synagogues and cemeteries in Bosnia and Herzegovina: 3.

Muslim sacral objects in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Damaged and destroyed mosques: 102;
Faculties and libraries: 6;
Cemeteries, monasteries and mausoleums: 6.

Imprisoned, missing and killed Catholic priests: 30.